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* Foreword

114 In September of the year 1883 His Majesty's ship "Marie" safely delivered in Montevideo the German-South Polar Expedition returning from the island of South Georgia. While the rest of the members returned home, Dr. Claus and I remained at La Plata in order to take advantage of the favorable opportunity for a journey of exploration into the interior of South America, together with my cousin, Wilhelm von den Steinen, who was already awaiting us there, as had been arranged.

• 121 After my initially cherished plan to explore the Rio Pilcomayo was thwarted as a result of the expedition of Herr Thour, which had just then been successfully completed, we turned our attention to the Schingü /Xingu/, the largest still unknown river of the South American continent, which promised interesting disclosures, especially from an anthropological point of view.

122 The German Minister-Resident in Buenos Aires, Herr Baron von Holleben, supported us in the most active and gracious manner. Through the good offices of the Brazilian Chargé d'Affaires, Herr Cavalcanti Lacerda, the Imperial Ministry was induced to provide us with a military escort.

114 Our trio was not unfavorably constituted for the purpose. Dr. Claus was a physician, my cousin a painter. The anthropological-ethnological part of the program fell to me as a physician who had already gathered some experiences from a journey around the world. My cousin had brought along the necessary instruments. He had prepared himself for a few months at the Hamburg Naval Observatory, under the kind supervision of the Privy Admiralty Councilor, Professor Dr. Neumayer; he was also helped by the latter's advice in the selection and procurement of the instruments.

[122] Since the president of the province of Mato Grosso, Herr Baron von Batovy, agreed to our wishes with the greatest readiness, success could not be lacking. Thus, we set out from Cuyabí /Cuiabá/ at the end of May in the year 1884 and reached Pará at the end of October.

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000 carriages, the lighted shops, the bustling crowd, and I gladly returned to my dark river in the primeval forest.

But are they so easily dispensed with, I asked myself in my reverie, these things that dominate and animate our whole world of feeling? One thing, at least, was certain: if the miracle, which did not happen, had happened, and a pair of the most luscious lips had suddenly smiled at me seductively from the bushes -- I would have smoked and graciously asked permission to go on smoking. The best thing, I concluded, seems to be if we are able, in the memory of finer enjoyments, to find quiet happiness in the simplest things: the philosopher of Wiedensahl is right once again: "Contentment is pleasure in things that we do not get."

And yet I would not have exchanged Berlin for the Schingu /Xingu/ simply and solely for the brown beans or the wilderness and river rapids: without a loftier purpose, that is, a hope which is rooted in serious concepts of culture, even the most unspoiled nature would very soon become intolerable. It is odd enough (21) that our like should come over from Germany and perhaps risk his precious life here -- in order to look for the home of the Karaiben /Cariba/! "What is Hecuba to him?" What is Cuyabí and Karíba to me?

Yet there are problems so puzzling and unfathomable that one is unable to solve them with an empty stomach, and it was fortunate that Carlos at the fire finally shouted his triumphant "pronto." The beans stood ready on the ground, the little bag of farinha /manioc flour/ lay beside them, a remnant of muting beckoned benevolently from the rammed-in wooden spike -- let the crickets go on chirping in the forest.

114 At 6:30 (10 September 1887) we departed, eager for the things which, according to the indications of yesterday, were
133 to come today. After 20 minutes a river flowed into ours from the right side, a stream as quiet /51/ as it was and only a little narrower. Later it was named for us as the Ponékuri. The predominant direction of the combined waterways was north to north-east: the same as the one that our earlier route had tried to

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On the following day, 11 September 1887, I sent Antonio and Carlos back to Independencia with the news: In exchange for a bush knife I had acquired one of the two canoes that the Bakaïrf possessed. I myself wanted to remain behind to have a new canoe made and, for the sake of my studies, to take advantage of the rare opportunity to stay alone among these children of nature. I heard that in the second Bakaïrf village lying downstream there were three canoes and we could perhaps obtain two of them. While a good rancho was to be built for those remaining behind at our permanent quarters, one or two men who were now to be fetched by Antonio and Carlos were to ride with me to the second Bakaïrf village; there we could complete our outfitting and then, if all went well, row back to Independencia with four canoes, in order finally to commence the actual river journey. Moreover, to save time, Antonio and Carlos were to leave their canoe at the first large cachoeira and find Independencia overland. Thus, along with the experiences gained in the meantime by the gentlemen at Independencia, the terrain would be thoroughly explored and the question settled as to whether the permanent quarters could not be pushed forward closer to the first Bakaïrf village.

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After I had brought the two worthies to the harbor and they had soon disappeared in the nearest bend of the river, I returned to my new friends and soon felt so comfortable in their midst that without hesitation I count those idyllic days among the happiest that I have experienced. I shall try to do them justice in a little sketch; this will give me the opportunity to report many little traits of the good people which could not be put in a purely scientific report, but which nevertheless are not without value, because they reveal the Indians to us not wholly as we are accustomed to imagine them. Not a little of this disappeared when the larger group arrived later; the complete unconcern which they showed toward me as a single individual did not remain, and their behavior more closely resembled the well-known pattern customarily described in books. And here I should immediately like to enter a protest, with regard to my

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[177] In January of 1887 Felipe gaily set out for Cuyabá to let himself be presented with more iron goods, but his hopes were not appreciated there, and he was sent home empty-handed. Tumayaua told us in 1887 that the Bakairi of the first Batovy village had again gone to the Paranatinga; they must have arrived there shortly after our departure. I had no further opportunity to hear more details about this later.

II. Shift of the Karaiben to the North.

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174 Chiefly relying on linguistic evidence, I attempted, on the basis of the results of the first Schingú /Xingu/ expedition, to defend the hypothesis that the newly discovered Karaiben /Carib/ in the source region of the Tapajoz /Tapajós/ and Schingú lived closer to the original seats of the tribe than did the Karaiben north of the Amazonas, that the latter immigrated from the south into the Guianas and from there crossed over to the Lesser Antilles.

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174 I advanced a movement in the same direction only for the Nu-Aruak /Arawak/ always appearing next to the Karaiben, although I was well aware that there was far greater uncertainty here than in the case of the Karaiben. Cf. Durch Central-brasilien, page 297 /omitted in 1:Steinen of this file, a translation of the work cited/. "Whether the common ancestors lived in the northern or southern part of the stretch of country over which we find the grandchildren distributed is rather unimportant considering the present state of our knowledge. My feeling -- that is all -- is more inclined to assume that the movement started from the plateau." My feeling, however, deceived me for an important part of the Nu-Aruak group, the Pareiss, of whom I had erroneous ideas based on reports of Cuyabans; for, at least according to the statements that I obtained from them directly in 1888, they definitely advanced from north to south, even though the boundary may be uncertain with regard to how far north their homeland is to be shifted. At the present time the problem concerning the Nu-Aruak is not yet to be taken in at a glance: we know too little about the Moxos /Mojo/ and

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[283] White is chalky white clay, a supply of which is kept in the huts in the form of balls the size of a child's head. The women, when they spin, rub it on the right thigh, on which they twist the thread. It is simply mixed with water. It is never used to paint the body; it also falls far back for the implements and appears almost solely on the masks, the painting of which need last but a few days, on painted bark pieces, and the like.

/419/ Charcoal and soot, the berry-pulp of the genipap tree, (Genipa) and a number of resins furnish black. In order to blacken the inside of the gourd shells charcoal from the bark of the buriti shaft is used.

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[304] The yellowish-red to brownish-red loam seems to have been driven out by the urucú dyestuff. It was formerly eaten and is still molded into heavy dolls for children and is rubbed on wounds for scarification.

[824] Charcoal and soot are rubbed in directly, like the white, or they are also mixed with liquid, like the urucú. Either the oil from the pikí fruit (Caryocar butyrosom) is used, or the yellow extract containing caoutchouc from a tree of the campo cerrado, which the Bakaíri call ochogohi and the bark of which is grated and made into an extract with water. The colors are mixed in a gourd shell or a pot or, when a hard resin is broken up with the ax blade, most conveniently in the cup-shaped depression of a stool. Urucú is always found as a paste wrapped in leaves in the little workbasket beside the hammock.

The dyestuffs available to the natives are therefore white, black, red, and yellow. The genipap-black is blue-black, the urucú-red a brick-red to orange, which, mixed with the yellow ochogohi juice, loses a good deal of its red. There are no blue or green dyestuffs.

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196 The theory that the color sense developed gradually for human beings, based on the fact that color distinction in language is inadequate up to a high level of culture and that blue and green in particular are extraordinarily often designated with the same word, has now been abandoned. It was found among all the primitive peoples investigated that they distinguish excellently

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- 121 the various color impressions with their eyes, that, for example,
- 196 they choose with normal accuracy like-colored shades out of a pile of many little bunches of wool, so there can be no question of color blindness, but that, as far as language is concerned, blue and green are mixed up with astonishing regularity. The correct solution was given by Ernst Krause (Carus Sterne). The human being, by natural inclination always most susceptible to the vivid impression of red, has found mineral and vegetable pigments in greatest abundance for this particular color. The next most frequent naturally formed dyestuff besides black and white is yellow, whereas green and blue dyestuffs are late products of the coloring technique. Color names were developed in accordance with use.

125 On a leaf of my journal Wilhelm entered colored spots of
 171 ultramarine, cobalt blue, emerald green, sap green, carmine,
 196 rose madder, vermillion, orange, cadmium yellow, burnt sienna, sepia, and ivory black. The attempt to obtain the names of colors by laying out vividly colored objects was a complete failure. They gave the names of the objects or these confused with the color names, and nothing stood in the way of drawing up an amusing list /420/ of these words, not one of which designated a color. A Waurá almost made me despair, and he in particular seemed to have different words for blue and green. But even if this misconception was eliminated -- and, to be sure, this was done best by the use of the definite color words already obtained from the neighboring tribe -- even if the people were really on the right track, the experiment usually became a veritable trial of patience. They would think it over, vacillate, sometimes disagree with each other; it was obvious that I was demanding something very unusual. Only the Auetó, the enthusiastic painters, proved amenable. But there was one difficulty that I was responsible for, since I not only had to become accustomed to hearing the same word for emerald green and ultramarine, but was also given other baffling information which I understood only after linguistic studies.

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3. Die Bakairi Sprache /The
Bacairi Language/. Leipzig, 1892.

account published in 1894, the richly illustrated, brilliantly written, forcefully conceived volume in which are discussed the main subjects of the primitive history of mankind, to sum up in a word, the richest modern contribution on all that touches upon our aborigines (4).

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4. Unter den Naturvoelkern
Zentral-Braziliens /Among the
Primitive Peoples of Central
Brazil; see 2:Steinen, this file/,
Berlin, 1894.

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At the same time that Dr. Steinen's book on the language appeared, a Bacairi was here, brought from the Paranatinga by Dr. Oscar de Miranda when he completed his difficult journey down that river to the Amazon. With this Indian, the author of these lines was able to study the German scholar's book word by word, and I cannot find words enough to express the admiration that was aroused in me by the exactitude of the phonetic transcription, the sharpness with which the grammatical forms had been discerned, and the thoroughness with which everything usable in the materials collected had been picked out. If the comparison be permitted in a country that boasts of being primarily agricultural, it might be said that his sugar mill, like one of the gigantic rollers in use today, squeezed out all the cane juice, leaving only the bagasse.

From that Indian, called Irineu, who will be designated with the initial "I," many texts were gathered--legends, descriptions, traditions. The present /223/ work aims at a partial presentation of this harvest. Based on the book by Dr. Steinen, whose system of phonetic transcription is adopted

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with slight variations, it is nevertheless more than a mere summary, for at several points our opinions differ, while at others heretofore unknown facts appear for the first time. This concerning the linguistic part, the subject of this first chapter. The divergence is even greater in the points that follow, which are based exclusively on what Irineu related.

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The Language of the Bacaeris

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The language of the Bacaeris (kxura itano, tohi itano, that is, language of people, exactly like abá ñeē, the language of the Tupis) is spoken on the Rio Novo (Yemeriri), a tributary of the Arinos; on the Paranatinga (Pakunéra), a tributary of the Tapajoz; on the Tamitatoala, one of the headwaters of the Xingú, called Batovi by the Germans in honor of the baron of the same name, president of Mato Grosso in 1884, the time of the first expedition; on the Culisewi, a tributary of the Culuene, also a headwater (the easternmost one) of the Xingú. On the Oronuro, the westernmost headwater, there are no Indians who speak this language. From an examination of the vocabularies and the grammatical forms, it was proved that the Bacaeris belong to the Carahiba or Cariba group.

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Of the letters of our alphabet, F is found in only one word, possibly onomatopoeic, which precedes incantations: aúfá, perhaps an imitation of the blowing out of smoke. V is rare, and in any case it is not pronounced as it generally is in Rio de Janeiro, but rather seems to be bilabial. R is always soft, that is, to use the description by Gonçalves Vianna, "the air is expelled at one time, without interruption, as in caro /'dear' in Port. /, and not intermittently, in successive contacts, more or less repeated, /225/ resulting from the vibration imparted by the active organ, as in carro /'cart' in Port. /." G is slightly velar, and to differentiate it from ours

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respect to this piece of information we must keep in mind the fact that in those times the Rio Paranatinga was regarded as a tributary of the Xingu River.

From an objective standpoint I have nothing to add to Karl von den Steinen's full account. I merely propose to complement it in time and to add what we know of the more recent history of the Bakairí since that period when Karl von den Steinen wrote his history of the Bakairí. I feel impelled to carry out this mission, especially in view of the fact that of my two expeditions, in which I had the most extensive contact with the Bakairí, the first took place 26 years before the second, so that I had a good opportunity to observe personally a great part of the change in the living conditions of the Bakairí in the times after Karl von den Steinen's publication. The Bakairí

[121] Andrés, who was my faithful companion /12/ on the trip from the Simões Lopes Post to the Pedro Dantas Post, established to civilize the Kayabí /Cayabí/, and on the return to Cuiabá, was the son of a Bakairí, born on the Rio Kulisehu and called Chico, who had been one of my traveling companions to the Rio Kulisehu in the year 1901. I also encountered in the year 1927 many old acquaintances among whom I had lived 26 years before in their village, Maimaieti, on the Rio Kulisehu. They all still remembered well the time we had spent together in the past. During my later stay in Cuiabá, up to the year 1931, the Bakairí boys who went to school in Cuiabá visited my house often, so that it enabled me to keep informed up to that date about all that went on among the Bakairí.

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175 Karl von den Steinen's two expeditions to the region of the headwaters of the Xingu River should be noted as an important event not only in the general history of discoveries but also, especially, in the history of the Bakairí. Through them was re-established the long broken connection between the Bakairí living on the Rio Paranatinga and their fellow countrymen on the Batovy and Kulisehu river. This fact had such an incisive

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influence on the later development of these Indians, with their very marked feeling of nationality, that they changed their primordial customs completely during the 50 years following Karl von den Steinen's second expedition carried out in the region of the headwaters of the Xingu River. Thanks to a series of data on events among the Bakairí in this interval, we find ourselves in the fortunate position of being able to investigate that transformation. We are oriented in detail on the personality and life history of several Bakairí who have influenced in a special way the later development of their tribe, like Cacique Reginaldo and, especially, Cacique Antonio and his stepson José Coroado, so that we can give our historical report on the Bakairí a more personal character than would be possible with respect to other Indian tribes.

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101 If we differentiate, according to Karl von den Steinen, the Bakairí who live west of the Rio Paranatinga (in later times officially Rio Telles Pires) as western Bakairí and the eastern Bakairí, who have their homes in the regions east of this river, on the tributaries of the upper Xingu River, it can be said that in the period of Karl von den Steinen's first expedition to the region of the headwaters of the Xingu River, no contacts took place between these two Bakairí groups, and certainly none had taken place for a long time. Old Cacique Reginaldo told Karl von den Steinen that he still remembered, from the days of his youth, that traveling from the Rio Paranatinga eastward, one would reach a big river on which it was said that Bakairí also lived, but that at the present date they did not know anything about this region. (4) Certainly no contact had taken

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[113] 4. Karl v. d. Steinen, Durch Central-
Brasilien /Through Central Brazil/.
Leipzig, 1886. p. 182.

place between the western Bakairí and those of the east from the time when the former established closer contact with the

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121 In order to protect themselves against the numerous
 756 supernatural dangers that surrounded them, the Bakairí
 784 /Bacairi/ made use of two methods: shamanism and the uanki
 state, or ritual seclusion. The aim of this article is to examine these two methods of Bakairí culture in the light of data gathered by us (1) and with the help of the existing relevant

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1. The data that we present were gathered in 1947, during a visit to the Simões Lopes Indian Post of the Indian Protection Service, which was sponsored by the School of Sociology and Political Science of São Paulo in collaboration with the Institute of Social Anthropology of the Smithsonian Institution. Except where specifically mentioned in a footnote, the data mentioned were obtained from the Simões Lopes Indians.

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literature. However, although the Bakairí have been visited from an early date by several ethnologists and their customs have been mentioned in the literature to support ethnological theories, very little is yet known on their culture as a whole. Most of the reports left by scholars do not give a rounded view of Bakairí culture and focus rather on their technology. On the other hand, the present-day Bakairí are quite acculturated, and it is difficult to obtain complete data on their old culture. We shall attempt nevertheless to try to contribute here to a clarification of the problem.

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The Bakairí now number about 250 individuals, according to the estimates of the Indian Protection Service, /260/ in 1947. They live in aldeas in Mato Grosso, at the Simões Lopes Post of the Indian Protection Service, on the banks of the Paranatinga River, and in groups scattered along the

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THE BACAIRI

114 This brief account of the Bacairi is based on
[101] field work done among the Bacairi living in the
Government Indian Post on the Rio Paranatinga
● [12] in June 1947. The field work was carried out
in the course of a reconnaissance survey which
the writer was then making of some of the central
and northern Indian tribes of Mato Grosso.

[122] This and other trips at the time were made in a
Ford truck put at the disposal of the writer by
the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios. By using a
truck the trip to the Paranatinga could be made
over the Planalto do Matogrosense in 2 days in
contrast to the old route along the Rio Cuiabá
which, on horseback with pack oxen, takes from
2 to 3 weeks. The writer was accompanied by
Fernando Altenfelder Silva of the Escola de
Sociologia e Política de São Paulo and by Rev.
Thomas Young and Rev. W. L. Buckman of the
South American Indian Mission. The Reverend Mr.
[115] Young, who has spent more than 10 years among
the Bacairi, was of great help in selecting inform-
ants and in adding to our knowledge of the
Bacairi.

161 According to estimates made in 1947 by the
36/ Brazilian Indian Service (Serviço de Proteção
aos Índios) there are between 200 and 250 Bacairi
living in the northern part of Mato Grosso State,
Brazil, divided between the Indian Post of Simão
Lopes on the Rio Paranatinga and the village of

173 Rio Novo some distance to the northwest. The

36/ Bacairi claim that the whole tribe originally

167 lived together on the Rio Paranatinga (headwaters

[648] of the Tapajoz River), but attacks by other
Indians and Brazilians forced them to move

about 90 years ago. Owing to a dispute the
tribe split, one group moving north to settle on
the banks of the Rio Kuliseu, a tributary of the
Xingú River, the other moving to Rio Novo.
After about 50 years in the Kuliseu Basin, this
group moved to the present location of Simão
Lopes, not far from the original Bacairi settlement
on the Rio Paranatinga. Although the Rio Novo

177 group has adopted Brazilian customs and manages

166 without Government help, some have moved to

648 Simão Lopes where the Bacairi now live on
reservation lands and receive assistance from the

Brazilian Government.